

## Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AFSA-04 PER-05 SS-20 A-01 RSC-01 /050 R

DRAFTED BY AF/A:RWILLIAMSON

APPROVED BY DG/EM:ADAVIT

AFSA:TBOYATT

AFSA:RMELTON

AFSA:FMC NEIL

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R 262233Z MAR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

UNCLAS STATE 060524

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: NA

SUBJECT: NEW OUT-OF-AREA POLICY

AFSA TELEGRAM

DELIVER TO: AFSA REPRESENTATIVE OR ALTERNATE

1. AS YOU KNOW, THE SECRETARY HAS DIRECTED THAT A NEW ASSIGNMENT POLICY BE INSTITUTED, DESIGNED TO BRING ABOUT A GREATER DEGREE OF DIVERSIFICATION OF EXPERIENCE IN GEOGRAPHIC AREAS AND AVOID OVERLY NARROW AREA SPECIALIZATION. THIS DECISION WAS TAKEN WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH AFSA. HOWEVER, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY SHARED THE SECRETARY'S CONCERN OVER THE DANGERS OF OVER-SPECIALIZATION, WHETHER FUNCTIONAL OR AREA, AND ACCORDINGLY SUPPORT THE GOAL HE WISHES TO ACHIEVE. FOR THIS REASON, AFSA HAS DECIDED NOT TO BRING UNFAIR PRACTICE CHARGES AGAINST THE DEPARTMENT AT THIS TIME FOR ADOPTING NEW PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES WITHOUT NOTIFYING US AND ACCORDING US THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT AS CALLED FOR IN THE EXECUTIVE ORDER.

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2. WE HAVE ALREADY WRITTEN THE SECRETARY TO EXPRESS OUR GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE POLICY GOAL, OUR CONCERN OVER THE LACK OF ADVANCE CONSULTATION, OUR CONCERN THAT THE NEW POLICY NOT INTERFERE WITH THE GROWING AREA AND LANGUAGE

COMPETENCE OF THE FSO CORPS, AND OUR CONCERN OVER THE HUMAN PROBLEMS WHICH MAY RESULT FROM THIS POLICY.

3. WE HAVE ALSO REQUESTED IMMEDIATE CONSULTATIONS ON THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO IMPLEMENT THIS PROGRAM. THE GOAL OF THIS CONSULTATION PROCESS SHOULD BE A BINDING AGREEMENT SPELLING OUT PARTICULAR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD GOVERN MANAGEMENT IN EXERCISING ITS RIGHTS TO MAKE INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT DECISIONS.

4. STATE MANAGEMENT HAS REQUESTED AFSA'S VIEWS ON AN URGENT BASIS ON THE SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NEEDED TO CARRY OUT THE SECRETARY'S GENERAL GOALS. WE HAVE ALSO HELD A MAJOR OPEN MEETING OF THE WASHINGTON MEMBERSHIP, ATTENDED BY OVER 400 OFFICERS, AT WHICH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL EXPLAINED HIS THINKING ON THE NEW POLICY IN GREATER DETAIL. IN PARTICULAR, THE DG INDICATED ON A PRELIMINARY BASIS THAT THE POLICY WOULD ONLY APPLY TO FSO PERSONNEL, BUT WILL APPLY TO ALL IRRESPECTIVE OF FUNCTIONAL SPECIALTY, THAT JUNIOR OFFICERS (FSO-6 AND BELOW) WOULD BE EXEMPT FROM THE POLICY, THAT THE POLICY WOULD FOCUS ON REAL CHANGES IN ASSIGNMENT PATTERNS, RATHER THAN BE BASED ON RIGID MATHEMATICAL FORMULAS, THAT OFFICERS CURRENTLY SERVING OUT-OF-AREA WOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO THEIR AREA, THAT SOME FLEXIBILITY WILL BE MAINTAINED AS TO WHAT CONSTITUTES AN AREA SPECIALIST AND WHAT CONSTITUTES AN OUT-OF-AREA ASSIGNMENT, THAT THE ONWARD ASSIGNMENT OF OFFICERS IN LANGUAGE TRAINING WILL NOT BE BROKEN, THAT CAREFUL ATTENTION WILL BE GIVEN TO FOREIGN POLICY NEEDS (E.G., ASSURING THAT IF THE AMBASSADOR AT A POST IS NOT AN AREA SPECIALIST, HIS OR HER DCM WILL BE), AND THAT THE HUMAN PROBLEMS WILL BE GIVEN CAREFUL ATTENTION.

5. AFSA NEEDS ON AN URGENT REPEAT URGENT BASIS YOUR UNCLASSIFIED

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VIEWS ON THE SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES WE SHOULD PRESS FOR IN THE UPCOMING CONSULTATIONS. IN THAT REGARD, BASED ON THE VIEWS OF THE WASHINGTON MEMBERSHIP, WE TENTATIVELY INTEND TO PUSH FOR THE FOLLOWING:

(A) THE BASE ON WHICH THE 20 PERCENT WILL BE CALCULATED SHOULD BE COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF THOSE MIDCAREER AND SENIOR OFFICERS WHO HAVE OVER-SPECIALIZED IN A

GEOGRAPHIC AREA.

(B) A POSSIBLE DEFINITION OF OVER-SPECIALIZATION WOULD BE AN OFFICER WHO HAS SPENT MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF HIS OR HER CAREER IN THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS WORKING IN OR DEALING WITH A GIVEN GEOGRAPHIC AREA.

(C) OFFICERS TO BE SELECTED FOR OUT-OF-AREA ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD FOCUS PRIMARILY ON THOSE OFFICERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY SERVING IN OR DEALING WITH A GEOGRAPHIC AREA, AND HAVE NOT RECENTLY SERVED OUT OF THAT AREA.

(D) OFFICERS WHO HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED ORDERS SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO COMPLETE THEIR TRANSFERS.

(E) OFFICERS WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN ASSIGNED BUT HAVE NOT YET GOTTEN THEIR ORDERS, AND WHOSE TRANSFER IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO JUNE 15 SHOULD BE POLLED TO DETERMINE IF A CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENT WOULD CAUSE PERSONAL HARDSHIP, AND IF SO, THE ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO PROCEED.

(F) THE POLICY SHOULD CONCENTRATE FIRST ON THOSE ALREADY UP FOR TRANSFER, AND ON OFFICERS IN WASHINGTON SERVING IN GEOGRAPHIC ORIENTED POSITIONS WHO COULD BE MOVED TO OTHER POSITIONS IN WASHINGTON. ONLY IF ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY SHOULD TOURS BE CURTAILED, AND UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THAT INVOLVE SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED REMOVAL OF OFFICERS FROM THEIR PRESENT POSTS.

(G) THE POLICY SHOULD NOT BE A ONE-SHOT OPERATION, BUT RATHER SHOULD BE A PERMANENT POLICY, PHASED OVER

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TIME AND DESIGNED TO ASSURE THAT THE SERVICE ENCOURAGES AREA AND LANGUAGE SPECIALIZATION WHILE AVOIDING THE DANGERS OF OVER-SPECIALIZATION.

6. AFSA REPS SHOULD POLL THE FSO MEMBERSHIP AT POST, AND OBTAIN MEMBERS' COMMENTS ON THESE POINTS, AS WELL AS ANY OTHER IDEAS AS TO GOALS AFSA SHOULD PUSH FOR DURING THE CONSULTATIONS. WE REPEAT THAT YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED ON AN URGENT BASIS.

7. REPLY AUTHORIZED. REGARDS, BOYATT RUSH

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